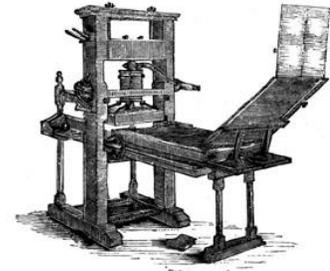
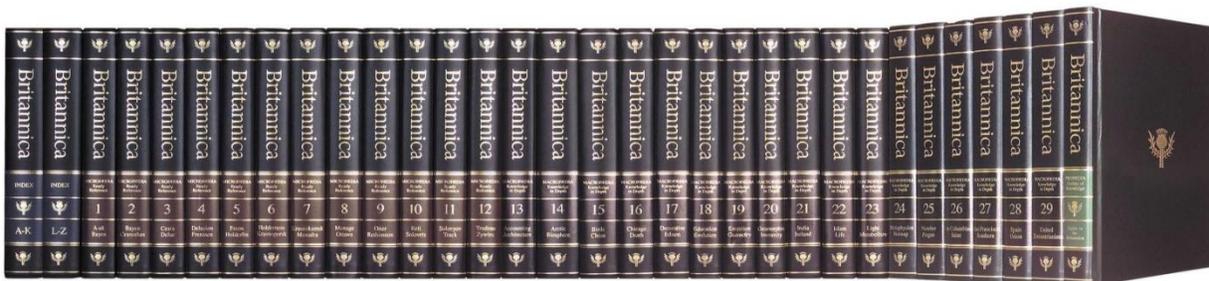


we see the election results of an event that took place in what was then called Samaria (modern day southern Iraq).

From here civilization moved on to the Egyptians who invented what we now use as our alphabet. But having a written language was only as good as people's ability to read. In addition to this very few people knew how to write. Such skills were a big deal just a thousand years ago. Most written communications were of religious topics and were written one at a time. This was a huge time consuming effort as you can imagine. Later as people learned how to read the very first printing press came along. In 1440 Johannes Gutenberg, a goldsmith by profession, devised a mold to create metal movable type, and adapted screw presses and other existing technologies, to create a printing system. The image upper right is what it looked like. For the very first time it was possible to print one page over and over for distribution to the people. It was, in that time period, as much of a big deal as the radio or TV or telephone was in the years yet to come.



Let's fast forward to just 50 years ago. If a family wanted to have access to a lot of knowledge on a huge number of topics they could buy this: 32 big, heavy books that pretty much summed up the most important knowledge of mankind at that time. This set of books was very expensive so they were bought and paid for one book at a time over 3 years in most cases. It was a point of pride if a person or family even owned this set of books.



Let's fast forward to today. Most of us have a cell phone that also has access to the Internet and that is a door to the entire knowledge of the world in the palm of our hands. Newspapers are going out of business because of this device and the computers we also use to reach around the world at the speed of light. Today we have access to numbers of web site pages with so many zeros it's hard to pronounce the actual number so let's just say trillions. A trillion is 1,000 billion and a billion is 1,000 million and a million is 1,000



thousands. Now think about reading anything with 1,000 pages. How long would that take you? Would you do it?

I think we now have a good picture of what knowledge is available to us. But what do we do with all this knowledge? The average person has access to more knowledge than heads of nations had just 100 years ago. Computers and global communications systems have allowed this to exist. But again, what do we do with it?

Let's start by first realizing that we don't need to know everything there is to know. We need to know what is necessary to enable us to pursue our dreams, create and support our careers and simply stay informed. Any more than this and we are very quickly overwhelmed with data we can't process. Newspapers, magazines, newsletters, billboards along the freeways, web sites, blogs, social media services, TV stations, You Tube, iTunes, Netflix, and tens of thousands of similar sources are available to us in one second at the touch of a glass screen.



We need some help, direction, leadership, guidance and advice. FOCUS is the key word with all the data coming at us every minute of every day. We need to separate the KNOWLEDGE we need from all the other distractions that will keep us from being effective. Perhaps one of the best

inventions of our modern age is the OFF button. We just need to turn off the noise and focus on the knowledge that we need or want.



Another great invention is the remote control. It too has an off button and a mute button. Perhaps we can reduce the noise by using these modern tools to limit the distractions that slow us down. It does not take much to overwhelm the human brain. As smart as we are true multitasking is no easy task for our brains when it comes to new knowledge. We may be able to drive a car, talk on the phone and chew gum at the same time but we can't listen to the radio and read a book at the same time. One of them has to be ignored for the other to work.

An exercise you can do is to make a list of the knowledge you'd like to focus on in just three or four areas. For example: Health, Money, your Job, perhaps the Community or Family. Just acquiring knowledge of these topics can use up all the time you have to give them.

In summary, just because we have access to all the knowledge in the world does not make us smarter; focusing on what matters most makes us smarter. There's an old saying that all people have 24 hours a day. Some use them wisely and others squander them while thinking that tomorrow is only a day away so we'll make up for it then. But tomorrow never seems to offer enough time to actually do it. Hmmm ... maybe we should check on Wikipedia to see what they have to say about this.

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Our consulting and coaching focus supports management, sales, customer service and operations. Included are sales and management assessment surveys as well as leadership, teambuilding, sales operations efficiency and tracking projects. Our other team members bring additional disciplines as well. We will showcase them in future editions of this business journal. We are all committed to driving the results you want.